घंटे में कुछ फर्क नहीं पड़ता, प्राइम मिनिस्टर का स्टेटमेंट हो जाए, उसके बाद अगर कोई रेज़ करना चाहे तो मैं अलाऊ कर दूंगा।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: महोदय, आप डायरेक्शन तो दीजिए कि बिहार को भी वे कंसिडर करें।

श्री सभापति: क्या करें?

श्री लालू प्रसाद: हरियाणा और उत्तर प्रदेश इन दो राज्यों के गन्ना किसानों को पैकेज दिया गया, बिहार को क्यों नहीं दिया गया?

डा॰ रमेन्द्र कुमार यादव ''रवि'': उत्तर प्रदेश और हरियाणा केन्द्र सरकार के साथ हैं इसलिए दिया गया।

श्री सभापति: ठीक है। मंत्री महोदय, तैयार रहिए इस पर। ...(**व्यवधान**)...मंत्री महोदय को मैंने कह दिया है। बैठ जाइए, बैठ जाइए। क्वेश्चन नं॰ 61। श्री प्रभाकर रेड्डी।

श्रीमती जमना देवी बारुपाल: सभापति महोदय,...

श्री सभापति: आप बैठ जाइए वहीं। एक मिनट के लिए भी अलाऊ नहीं करुंगा, रिकार्ड पर जाएगा नहीं। क्वेश्चन नं॰ 61, श्री पी॰ प्रभाकर रेड्डी।

Proposal on opening of Indo-Bangla border

*61. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Bangladesh has sent a proposal to the Government to open the Indo-Bangla border for a period of six months on an experimental basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof and arguments addressed in favour of the proposal; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Sir, my question is that, recently, the Government of India has given a notification, allowing duty free import of 40 items, and the Hon. Finance Minister said that some more items are going to be allowed under the Duty Free Arrangement. Sir, it

has been reported in the newspaper—it is *The Hindu* on May 23, that "Bangladesh has proposed that India open its border for six months on an "experimental basis" for free access of its products to the latter's markets. This proposal is made amid the country's trade deficit to the tune of $1 billion, per annum, with India, and limiting Bangladesh exports to India due to imposition of non-tariff and para-tariff barriers."

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they have made any such request. If they have made such a request, what is the response of the Government?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, As far as our trade relations with Bangladesh are concerned, we have negotiated with them a Preferential Tariff Arrangement under the SAARC process, SAPTA. And bilaterally also, we have moved forward with Bangladesh on the Question of Preferential Trade Arrangement. It is a fact that Bangladesh, in its trade, has a major imbalance because our exports are worth about a billion U.S. dollars; their exports to us are about 50-60 million U.S. dollars, and this is a highly surcharged emotional issue in Bangladesh. Now, in order to correct this, what we have suggested to Bangladesh is that we should have a Free Trade Arrangement as we have had with Sri Lanka and that is a Free Trade Arrangement which will take care of this problem in a structured, comprehensive and durable basis. I was, Sir, on my second visit to Bangladesh in the last twelve months, in Bangladesh on the 14th and 15th, and I am happy to be reporting to the House, through you, Sir, that the Government of Bangladesh has accepted India's suggestion, and they have also agreed that the negotiations for the Free Trade Agreement between the two countries will begin immediately after the Cancun Ministeria before the middle of October. This is the agreement which has been reached. At the same time, when I was in Dhaka, the Government of Bangladesh handed over a list of 118 items where they suggested to us that we should give them a duty free treatment. We have taken note of that suggestion. But I have told the Bangladesh interlocutors that it would be better if these things are negotiated with the framework of FTA.

SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Sir, my second supplementary is this. ...(*Interruptions*)... This is a very important question. It has been reported in the newspapers that Bangladesh was actively abetting and supporting the groups which are inimical to India and it had become a

nerve centre for terrorist outfits. The hon. External Affairs Minister, during his recent visit to Bangladesh, has taken up this issue with the Bangladesh Government. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether these activities have come down and whether it will have an overall impact on the relationships between India and Bangladesh, particularly, on trade relationship.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, as far as the issue of Indian insurgency group operating from Bangladesh is concerned, this is an issue that we had taken up with the Government of Bangladesh, from time to time. I remember that when I visited Bangladesh last year, in August, I was assured by the Government of Bangladesh—it was an assurance, which was reiterated—that they would not allow the Bangladesh territory to be used for any anti-Indian activity. When their Foreign Minister was here, in February this year, we had taken up this matter with him. When I was in Dhaka recently, we had again taken up this matter. So, whenever we get an opportunity we take up this matter and impress upon the Government of Bangladesh the need to move effectively in this matter so that Bangladesh territory is not misused and that they promised, the assurance that they have given us is an assurance which is fulfilled.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Sir, in the last few years, in the name of regional development cooperation among the SAARC countries, our borders are being opened up for free trade. Sir, you would appreciate that India is a consumer country. We are the consumers. Now, from Bangladesh millions and millions Dollars worth of goods are brought into India on day-to-day basis just declared that they are manufactured in Bangladesh. But they are being imported into Bangladesh, completely assembled and then made into finished goods there; and they just label it and dump it into India duty free. The same thing happens in the case of Sri Lanka.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please come to the question.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: During the recent visit of the hon. Prime Minister to China two borders have been opened. We must take some precautions; otherwise, we will become a dumping market. What happened was that the Gujral Government had signed an agreement with Nepal, which was a defective agreement, and till today our industry has been suffering. As regards vanaspati, the requirement of Nepal for

ten years is imported into Nepal every month and it is being dumped into India. My question to the hon. External Affairs Minister is: What precautions are we taking so that our industry does not suffer?

Now, Sir, there is a move to open the Myanmar border also. You know that through the Myanmar border..

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a question. Let him reply.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: ... a lot of narcotic smuggling is going on. In the recent past there was a seizure in Kolkata and a lot of people were caught. In that seizure incident a Government employee was also involved. So, we should be very careful about this. What precautions are you taking.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, we are extremely careful and I bring all my previous experience here to be able to answer the question that the hon. Member has asked. In negotiating free trade agreements, we take care to have a provision about "value added" and this is negotiated as to how much value should be added, whether it should be 50 per cent or whether it should be 60 per cent or whether it should be 80 per cent, and the "value added" takes care of the problem that if that country with which we have an agreement is importing something and we export it without adequate value added, then, that will not qualify for duty free treatment. This is one point, Sir. The other is, you look at our tariffs. Our tariffs are also coming down. In case the tariff regime itself is harmonised to an extent, that takes care of cheaper import of raw materials and even finished goods. At the same time, I must also say that what we are trying to create in South Asia is a win-win situation for all the countries in this region. India, as the largest country, must play its role very responsibly, as a promoter of this concept of cooperation between the SAARC countries in the region. This is the broader vision that we have and this must always be kept in mind. So far as the question on vanaspati and other things is concerned, we have even been permitted by the WTO the concept of tariff quota where we say only so much can be imported duty free and the rest will have to pay duty. There are various protections in the trade regime which take care of the problems that the hon. Member has raised.

श्री प्रेम गुप्ता: मान्यवर, श्रीलंका से अभी कॉपर वायर आ रहा है। उसमें क्या वेल्यू एडिशन होगा आप बताइए जरा?

श्री सभापति: आपका हो गया।

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the trade agreement that we are working out with Bangladesh is contingent on reciprocal undertaking by bangladesh to allow free transit of Indian goods through Bangladesh to the North East.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is not contingent on transit and transhipment. But this is an issue that we have raised with Bangladesh right from the beginning. There are agreements between India and Bangladesh entered into in 1972, reiterated in 1973, reiterated in 1980, reiterated in 1997 and 1999 where they have agreed to give us transit and transhipment rights. But the transit and transhipment right, as the hon. House might be aware, is mainly through the inland water route. So far as railway and road transits are concerned, Bangladesh's point has been that it is not fit enough or strong enough or adequate enough to be able to take the load of the transit of goods which will move from one part of India to another. This is something that we are continually discussing with them. The reply to the question is the two are not contingent on each other.

चीनी पर उपकर से संग्रहण

*62. **श्री राम जेठमलानी:†**
लाला लाजपत राय:

क्या उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत के नियंत्रक महालेखा परीक्षक ने अपने हाल के प्रतिवेदन में चीनी पर 14 रूपये प्रति क्विंटल की दर से चीनी पर प्रभारित उपकर के माध्यम से एकत्रित निधियों के दुरुपयोग पर चिंता प्रकट की है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) मार्च, 2003 तक इस कोष में कुल कितनी राशि जमा की गयी थी; और

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† सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री राम जेठमलानी द्वारा पूछा गया।